



## IS YOUR PET “OVER 40”?

Although pets age at different rates by the time your pet is seven years old. It will be well over 40 in pet years. This is the time when pets, like people, begin to experience gradual changes in their physical capabilities. Your pet is also entering a time in its life when it is at increased risk for disease associated with aging.

We recommend a Senior Pet Screen at this time. It is like an “over 40” physical for your pet, and it is one of the best tools veterinarians have to detect the early signs of age-related diseases. In many cases, we can minimize or stop the progression of an illness we discover early, and we will also gain valuable baseline health data on your pet.

The Senior Pet Screen and paying attention to the following can usually help minimize your pet's risk of disease and other age-related problems.

### Weight Control

Make sure that your pet's weight is within normal range for its size and build. As pets age their metabolism tends to slow down, and they are frequently less active, both of which can contribute to weight gain. Ask us about reducing your pet's food portions or changing to a less caloric diet.

Conversely if your pet is losing weight, an underlying disease may be the problem, and the Senior Pet Screen may help pinpoint the condition.

### Exercise

If your pet is healthy and has no conditions that would prevent it from exercising, now is a good time to start it on a regular exercise program. We'll be glad to give you advice on exercising your pet if you have questions.

### Oral Care

Like people, pets have more gum infections and tooth loss as they age. Oral problems may make chewing difficult or painful for your pet, and bacteria from a gum infection can travel to other parts of your pet's body, such as heart, kidneys, or lungs. Keeping your pet's teeth clean with at-home care and bringing it in for regular professional teeth cleaning and oral health checks become more important with age.

## Disease Detection

Diseases of the heart, kidneys, bladder, thyroid, and joints occur more frequently in older dogs and cats. Routine physical examinations, blood work and other tests, such as EKG, can usually detect these problems early while they are the most treatable, thus minimizing the damage to your pet.

## Home Pet Health Check

Be sure to check your pet each month for the 10 following signs of pain or disease so that you can recognize problems early and bring your pet in for help:

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|-----|-----|----|--|
| 1.  | Yes | No | My pet sometimes seems stiff or has difficulty getting up and down or is sore after running and jumping. |
| 2.  | Yes | No | My pet has gained weight or lost weight  |
| 3.  | Yes | No | My pet has been coughing or seems winded after walking   |
| 4.  | Yes | No | My pet has increasing episodes of vomiting or diarrhea   |
| 5.  | Yes | No | My pet is drinking more water than usual   |
| 6.  | Yes | No | My pet urinates more frequently and sometimes has accidents  |
| 7.  | Yes | No | My pet's eating habits have changed  |
| 8.  | Yes | No | My pet has bad smelling breath and/or red, irritated gums  |
| 9.  | Yes | No | My pet sometimes seems disoriented or is slow to respond   |
| 10. | Yes | No | My pet just isn't acting like herself/himself.   |
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If you answered yes to any of these questions', you pet may have a health problem. Pets can't tell you what's wrong, and it's always a good idea to have them checked if you suspect they have a problem.

If you have any concerns or questions about your pet, or want to make an appointment, please call us today at:

Absecon Veterinary Hospital  
51 North Shore Road  
Absecon, New Jersey 08201

(609) 646-7013